



Quarterly Impact Report

July – September 2021



Batonga

batongafoundation.org

Dear friends,

Another quarter of change!

This report shows the pace at which our amazing team is building change alongside the incredible adolescent girls and young women in our programs.

I am amazed at what three months can bring. Over the summer, our team in Benin worked on building girls' understanding and practice of citizenship. We trusted girls with financial resources to design and implement community projects based on the priorities they identified and cared about. Their leadership has been incredible to watch! We're also so excited to have our new curriculum around Citizenship and Rights for girls and young women, a tool that Batonga mentors will keep using in our Clubs and Young Women Business Circles.

And of course, I would be amiss if I didn't mention the incredible work that has been done by our *Nos Voix Comptent* (Our Voices Count) members since the summer. After having mobilized hundreds of francophone African advocates around this historic moment at the Generation Equality Forum, and advocated for an inclusive and participatory process, we evaluated the project's impact and planned its next steps. I'm excited to say it's just the beginning: *Nos Voix Comptent* will continue to strengthen the women's rights movement in francophone Africa in the next two years. Stay tuned for more news soon!

We're already focused on wrapping up this productive year, but I hope you will take a few minutes to read this report, and see what you have all enabled us to achieve. Thank you for your support: we couldn't do this without you!

With gratitude,
Emily



Emily Bove
Executive Director

KEY MILESTONES

(July – September 2021)

New girl led community service projects launched

In July, girls and their mentors worked together to design another round of girl-designed and led community service projects related to civic engagement, civic leadership, and citizenship. In August, 25 projects were selected for funding and the first rounds of funding were distributed to Mentors and girls. 20 projects have been launched so far and the remaining will be launched in October.



Winners receiving funding from their mentor

Some of the projects launched include:

Safety barriers on 3 dangerous roadsides which have resulted in the death of several young people

The construction of 50 tables and benches for local schools

The purchase of school supplies and books for 120 girls who could not afford them

Payment of the fees to help 304 primary school girls obtain copies of their birth certificates



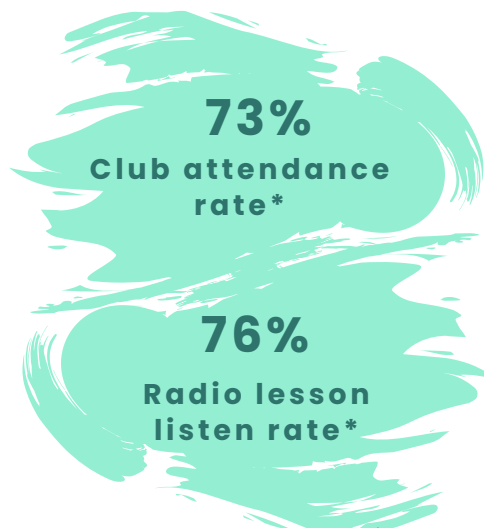
Recipients of school supplies donated by a winning community project

We launched a new citizenship and rights curriculum

In July, Batonga’s 47 Mentors were convened in Bohicon and Savalou for the first official Mentor trainings of the year. Batonga staff took this opportunity to introduce and train Mentors on the newly completed “*Citoyennes en Herbes*,” or “Citizens In Becoming,” citizenship and rights curriculum, developed and funded through our partnership with the Open Society Initiative for West Africa. These lessons are now being taught in all Clubs and corresponding radio lessons and informational spots have been broadcast on our 4 partner radio stations in Central Benin.

The citizenship focused radio broadcasts have received an overwhelmingly positive response from communities and have even inspired spontaneous community service projects led by program participants and community members not affiliated with Batonga alike:

- The girls of the village of Tovigomè, after listening to the radio lesson on environmental protection and citizenship, took the initiative to organize an awareness campaign on pollution and the importance of good public sanitation and to lead an effort to clean their community spaces.



- About 30 motorbike taxi drivers regularly get together to listen to the Batonga radio broadcasts at the taxi station. After listening to the program on environmental protection and citizenship, they decided to organize a community clean up of the entire interior and exterior area of their taxi station.

*Batonga considers attendance and listening rates over 70% to be success, since program participants also have to engage in work activities, support their families and travel.



"The radio programs have really increased our value and our notoriety in the community and the populations respect us and give us a lot more consideration. They look to us as a reference for how to be a good citizen now."

- Bénédicte, Mentor

Our Young Women Business Circles are continuing to expand their businesses



YWBC member tending to agricultural business

The 50 Young Women Business Circles (YWBCs) we support continued to remain profitable and bring in a steady source of income.

For example, one business from Tchogodo decided to incorporate agricultural products into their business to diversify their activities. As they don't own land, they identified and negotiated with the land owner for a plot of land they could use. For the first trial, they grew maize and when the land owner witnessed how hard they had been working, she gave them more arable land. Since then, they have now cultivated maize, cassava, and local vegetables.

Due to this extra effort and their willingness to overcome poverty and put into practice their learnings at Batonga, their incomes are increasing every month and young women from this circle have said they feel much more confident about their financial status and are improving their community by providing fresh vegetables and affordable agricultural products.

Over
\$1,686
 Generated by
 YWBCs in Q3 2021

Batonga Mentors attended their first training session of the year

In July, Batonga's 47 Mentors were convened in Bohicon and Savalou for the first official Mentor trainings of the year. Batonga staff took this opportunity to introduce and train Mentors on the newly completed "Cityonnes en Herbes," or "Budding Citizens," citizenship and rights curriculum. In addition, Mentors were able to collaborate and share with each other their methods for supporting the young women and girls in their programs as well as to help them overcome challenges.



Mentors participating in training

Evaluating our advocacy impact and organizing a member-led planning process for the future of Nos Voix Comptent!

Following the Generation Equality Forum in July, Nos Voix Comptent (NVC) has been reflecting on its impact thus far and taking time to work with its members to determine our next steps and highest priorities. An impact survey was conducted following the forum which found:

We evaluated our impact through an impact survey with our members



Over 90% of respondents agreed that NVC provided valuable information about the Generation Equality Forum process and that they believed they would continue to benefit from NVC’s support in the post-Generation Equality Forum process.

Over 80% of respondents stated that they did feel better prepared and equipped to engage in the Generation Equality Forum process thanks to NVC.

Over 87% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Nos Voix Comptent strengthened collaboration and partnerships between Francophone organizations around the Generation Equality Forum process

We brought our members together for a strategic planning session



167 NVC members came virtually together on September 23rd to build our common future. The chosen priorities by our members for what comes next are the following impact objectives:

- The effective participation and representation of Francophone organizations in the post-Forum Generation Equality process, and in peripheral decision-making processes
- Francophone organizations are members of Coalitions of Actions and contribute in a sustainable and effective manner
- Francophone organizations have secure and self-managed spaces to organize, mobilize, and strengthen their dialogue, cooperation and intergenerational partnership.

MEET OUR MENTORS

Get to know Carmelle and Nadège!

Meet Carmelle, Mentor in Covedji village, Savalou Benin



"My name is Carmele and I am a mentor in Covedji. I love being a Mentor because of the bond I form with the young girls. They confide in me and ask me questions that sometimes leave me speechless. These are young girls who do not have the chance to converse with their parents, to form friendships with those their age, or even to have recreational activities to develop their mind. In the Clubs, there are

moments of sharing, tolerance, understanding, and acceptance because we have come from different areas and we have the obligation to support each other which is why I love teaching the Clubs. Today we see that young girls trust each other more and express themselves freely in front of an audience. They are able to make their own decisions and make their choices in many areas of their life."

Meet Nadège, Mentor in Alikpa village, Bohicon Benin

"My name is Nadège and I am a Mentor in Tovigomin. I like being a Mentor because I love forming connections with the girls in my Clubs. As the girls' big sister and their mentor, I have an obligation to notify them of what awaits them so that they can prepare and face any situation. Young girls of their age are confronted with many situations they don't

even know exist. Many of them actually have their first menstruation in our Clubs. I am able to help them through this process so they can talk to their parents about it. Thanks to the teachings, the girls have changed and the community has emerged from ignorance, resulting in a decline in violence and unwanted pregnancies."



**Thank you for
supporting
our work!**

If you have any questions,
please contact
info@batongafoundation.org



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